GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated under the Federal law as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

CONTENTS FOR WEEK OF NOVEMBER 17, 1924. Vol. III. No. 17.

1. Sifting the Story of Americans Before Columbus Came.
2. The Genealogy of the Mighty Pen.
3. Congress of Nations Agrees to Cut World Postage Bill.
4. Tiny Countries of Europe.
5. French Guiana No Longer France's Jail.

© *National Geographic Society.*

SPREEWALD, GERMANY, POSTMAN MAKES HIS ROUNDS ON SKATES

(See Bulletin No. 3)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETIN

The Geographic News Bulletin is published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Sifting the Story of Americans Before Columbus Came

BRINGING back the first complete necklace of turquoise yet found in the ruins of the prehistoric Indian cities of the American Southwest, in addition to much pottery and six unique baskets of superior workmanship, the National Geographic Society's expedition to Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, will soon return to Washington, D. C., headquarters to report the discoveries of its fourth year's work.

Preliminary information shows the current season's painstaking labor of piecing together the lost story of forgotten tribes with bits of bone and scraps of earthenware sifted out of the sand will prove one of the most fruitful of any season since the task of revealing the life and history of the Indian "apartment house" was undertaken.

More than 300 rooms have been cleared and many kivas, or circular ceremonial chambers, already have been exposed to the desert sunlight. Only four years ago the great ruin was only a vast heap of rock and earth, fallen walls, and wind-blown accumulations of uncounted centuries.

The explorations revealed that Pueblo Bonito was a busy village confined within a single dwelling. When inhabited it stood four stories high, included some 900 rooms, and sheltered 1,200 or more persons.

Some ancient walls still stand more than 30 feet high. Its 400 ground-floor rooms occupy an area almost equal to that of the United States Capitol.

"Pay Dirt" of the Explorer

Four teams and a miniature railroad operate to remove the vast quantities of debris from the huge ruins. In a single summer 20,000 tons of debris—enough to fill a freight train of 400 gondola cars—were removed.

If, in this haystack of the centuries, a ton of litter yields a bit of pottery, a tiny bell or a wisdom tooth, the history prospector thinks he has struck "pay dirt." Most of the actual work is performed by Indians.

The many treasured specimens thus far recovered have been forwarded to Washington and, upon the conclusion of the expedition's work, they will be presented to the Government. They will constitute an outstanding gift of their kind.

Left No Written Record

No written record or picture language inscription was left by these early Americans. But it already is possible to piece together their life history from the evidence of the silent walls of their abandoned rooms and the scattered objects recovered from their deserted dwelling. Their daily activities, their organizations, their town enterprises and their struggles against more warlike tribes can be pictured. It is believed that the Bonitans, who lived in what now is the Chaco Canyon National Monument, in northwestern New Mexico, probably had the most important settlement in the southwestern United States in pre-Columbian times.

UMI

© National Geographic Society.

MONTE CARLO AND ITS CASINO

Eight miles square and having a permanent population of only 28,000, Monaco is able to attract to its gates two million visitors in a season. Interest in this tiny independent state on the Riviera coast centers about the stately casino (see Bulletin No. 4).

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

The Genealogy of the Mighty Pen

BEBE NORRIS of New York, N. Y., is a stenographer, A. D. 1924. She doesn't trace her blood lineage to ancient Babylon. But Bebe had what might be called a "professional grandmother," a hundred or so times removed—Bibea Narem, by name—who did precisely the same sort of work as Bebe's for a prominent merchant in Mesopotamia's greatest city more than two thousand years before Christ.

When Bibea's boss clapped his hands, or made whatever signal Babylonian bosses made in place of pressing a buzzer button, Bibea grabbed her stenographic "pad," picked up a stylus and hurried in to take dictation.

Find Oldest Known Pen In Kish

"Murashu Sons, Murashu Building, Nippur: Honored Gentlemen," probably began the dictator, addressing the historic banking firm which held the place in Babylonia that the Rothschilds have held in Europe.

As her employer dictated Bibea rapidly jabbed her stylus into the soft clay of her little "pad." For, like all her stenographic sisters of 4,000 years ago, Bibea was literally a "pencil pusher." The stylus was a little rod of bone about six inches long, triangular in cross-section, cut off sharply at one end so that when this end was pressed into damp clay it left wedge-shaped impressions.

Such a bone stylus, described in dispatches from Bagdad as "the oldest known pen," recently was dug up on the site of the ancient city of Kish, and gave explorers one of their best specimens of the tool with which the priceless cuneiform tablets of Babylonia and Assyria were made. The discovery of this stylus enables one to reconstruct with actual names and facts gleaned from other recent discoveries, a scene in a typical business office of forty centuries ago.

After the dictation was finished the dictator might very well have issued such familiar instructions as these: "Please make a copy of that, Miss Narem; sign it for me, and get it off. Have an engagement that will keep me out until after the Nippur mail leaves." For Babylonian business firms kept copies of letters in their files; almost everyone of any prominence had a personal seal used by himself or his employees in signing documents; and regular postal routes were maintained between Babylon and the other principal cities of the empire.

Man Is the Only "Writing Animal"

Man is even more truly distinguished as a "writing animal" than as a "speaking animal," for it is the growing fund of knowledge set down on various surfaces by various implements, and so passed on to generation after generation, that has made possible development in the arts, sciences and industries. Back of the Kish stylus are more primitive members of the pen family: chisels to cut into stone and wooden tablets, thorns to scratch on hides, flint splinters with which to furrow cave walls, bones and sticks with which to make probably the first rude marks of all in sand or dirt. In a parallel line stretch back the

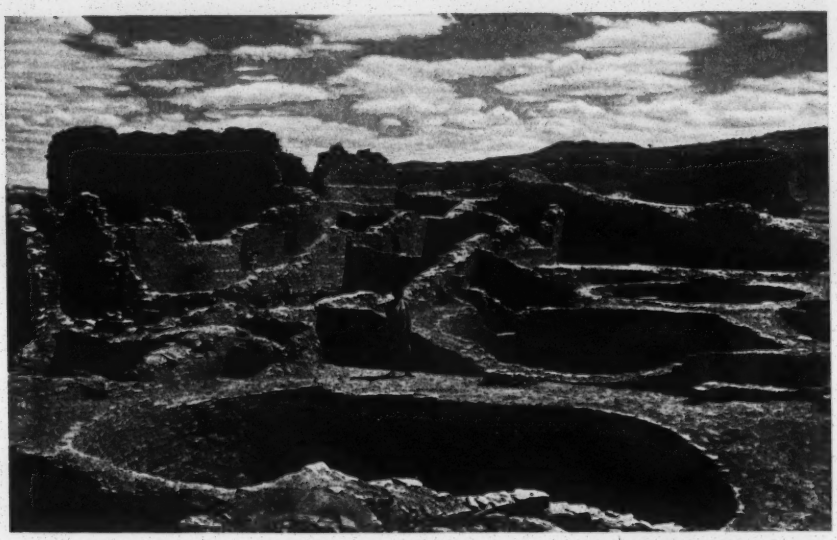
UMI

Pueblo Bonito Has No Link With Tutankhamen

With the exploration of the Pueblo Bonito ruins the early history of America has begun to attract world interest—an interest being increased with the sending of a National Geographic Society expedition to uncover the great mound of Cuicuilco in the Valley of Mexico, which may be 7,000 years old. Of the relation of Pueblo Bonito to other explorations Dr. Judd says:

"There is a rare possibility that some cultural connection will be found between the former inhabitants of Pueblo Bonito and the Maya, ancient temple builders of Yucatan and Guatemala. There absolutely is no chance of tracing any relationship between our prehistoric southwestern tribes and those of the Old World. Tutankhamen and his fellow Egyptians represent a high stage of cultural development along the desert borders of the Nile; the ancient Bonitans surpassed all their contemporaries in the desert regions of our Southwest but the prehistoric peoples of America and Egypt had nothing in common."

Bulletin No. 1, November 17, 1924.



© *National Geographic Society.*

PART OF THE EXCAVATED SECTION OF PUEBLO BONITO

In attacking a new sector trainloads of building stone, adobe, plaster, and wind-blown sand have to be removed. Then bad holes in the masonry are repaired and the frayed edges filled to prevent rain water from running into empty rooms. Foot by foot the original dimensions and construction of the Indian "apartment house" are being revealed (see Bulletin No. 1).

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Congress of Nations Agrees to Cut World Postage Bill

MANY nations are now preparing to reduce their postage rates as a result of the agreements reached by the Universal Postal Union which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary at the Stockholm, Sweden, Congress which opened last July 4.

The delegates of the nations appropriately gathered for the celebration of postal progress on America's Independence Day, because to the United States goes the honor of laying the foundation for the Universal Postal Union.

This association of nations, at fifty years, is the oldest large organization of world states. It has reduced the world's postage bill by billions, and increased the letters exchanged by millions. It has made neighbors of Kalamazoo and Timbuktu and has put sewing machines in Turkish harems.

Saving $2.48 on a New Zealand Letter

The difference between $2.50 and a 2-cent postage stamp represents to the individual the most dramatic feature of the Postal Union's accomplishments. Ten years before the Postal Union was thought of, it cost $2.50 to send an ounce letter to New Zealand; to-day it costs 2 cents.

The blow to the high cost of mailing illustrated by the United States-New Zealand instance has been repeated to a lesser degree with all foreign mail. Reduction of the cost of an ounce letter to England from 12 cents to 2 cents, to France from 72 cents to 5 cents, and to Brazil from 30 cents to 2 cents, dates back to a conference called with the approval of Abraham Lincoln. Agreements of this conference were built into the postal convention or treaty, signed at Berne, Switzerland, in 1873. Although the actual fifty-year anniversary occurred last year, the Universal Postal Union celebrated it at Stockholm this year, since 1924 is the year of its regular meeting.

Last year the United States spent $10,000,000 to send 415,000,000 pieces of mail, excluding parcel post, abroad; and received 362,000,000 pieces.

Dispatch of 22,000 sacks of mail from the New York foreign mail post office is not uncommon to-day. On one trip the *Mauretania* brought in 14,000 sacks.

When Recipients Picked Out Their Own Mail

It is a far cry from these thousands of sacks of mail to Burns Coffeehouse, once post office for all Manhattan. In this old tavern near the Battery letters were stuck in a rack to be called for by the addressees.

The man who sticks a 5-cent stamp on a letter with the assurance it will reach a missionary in Tibet cannot appreciate the troubles his grandfather had sending a letter only as far as Canton. First his grandfather had to choose one of five ways of sending the letter. It might go by German mails through England to Brindisi, Italy, to the Orient, or through Germany to Brindisi. It might pass through Great Britain via Southampton or via Brindisi, or might go by the United States packet. Each route had a different charge, varying from 20 cents to 68 cents. In our grandfathers' time each sender had to pay the cost of transportation over and above postage; now nations' representatives

UMI

fewer ancestors of the pencil: bits of lead, lumps of chalk and soft earths, and the ends of charred sticks.

The descendants of the Babylonian stylus and the scratching tools that preceded it present a startling array of implements and mechanisms. In China and Egypt paper and papyrus were invented to replace the cruder and heavier writing surfaces and the great forward step was made of applying a third substance, ink, by means of a brush or pen. The Egyptian reed pen, made of a hollow tubular stem, may be looked upon as the direct ancestor of the modern pen. It had practically the form of its present-day descendant, being pointed and slit to make it pliable.

When a Pen Was Also a Sword

The early Greeks and Romans, however, did not use any material comparable to paper. They first scribbled with chalk on broken bits of pottery, or scratched with pointed metal rods on wooden blocks. Their next step was to cover the blocks with wax and scratch their messages in that material. Their styli had knobs on one end used to smooth out erroneous marks. New wax could be applied and the tablets used over and over. The metal styli were truly as mighty as swords, serving as daggers when desired. Julius Caesar is said to have been stabbed to death with such pens.

When papyrus reached Greece and Italy the reed pen and the use of ink went with it. This combination was also used in writing on sheepskin parchment and vellum, and in the hands of slaves, and later monkish copyists, went into the making of the world's most highly prized illuminated manuscripts and hand-wrought books.

Quills, chiefly from goose feathers, furnished the next source for improved pens. Not until the nineteenth century did detachable metal pen points come into general use and shoulder quills out. Now something like three million gross of them are made yearly in the United States alone.

The steel and gold pens, and even the latest models of fountain pens, do not complete the pen genealogy. The far-off bit of bone or flint used by the less dumb savage who recorded an unimportant event many thousand years ago was truly the original ancestor of our typewriters, our etching needles, the light rays and acids we have harnessed to make our half-tones, and the gigantic, thunderous printing presses that grind out their millions of newspapers, magazines and books.

Bulletin No. 2, November 17, 1924.

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Tiny Countries of Europe

MONACO recently applied for membership in the League of Nations. "Too small," was the League's reply.

Monaco, with its eight square miles of territory, perched 300 feet above the Mediterranean in the heart of the Riviera, is, indeed, the world's smallest principality. The District of Columbia is more than seven times the size of Monaco.

The little country has a checkered and interesting history. Its beginning dates to the days of Hercules, almost 2,000 years before the birth of Christ. How strange it is that this hero who accomplished well-nigh impossible deeds by sheer physical labor should have been even the traditional founder of a state whose major revenue is obtained from games of chance!

Theodoric the Great seems to have been the only one of the great European conquerors who gave the little country any rest from wars which bore it down continuously.

Modern figures show that the industries and trade of Monaco are unimportant in comparison to its revenue from tourists. During 1913 there were nearly two million visitors in the principality for its 23,000 population to take care of.

Until 1911 the Prince of the country was an absolute ruler, but in that year he gave his subjects a constitution which provides for a National Council elected by the people.

San Marino Smallest Republic

Monaco has a close second in diminutiveness, and a rival in the claim of age, in the independent Republic of San Marino, which is the smallest republic in the world. Surrounded by Italy, which respects its autonomy, this republic rears its thirty-eight square miles of territory to a point 2,500 feet above sea-level. Its founder, San Marino, came from Arbe in the fourth century to aid the oppressed Christians build the stone walls of the city of Rimini. Born of his desire for peace, solitude and simplicity of living, these qualities have been impressed in the national character of the republic and for generations have been reflected in its history. The beloved saint taught his people that war should be resorted to only for self-defense.

San Marino is governed by a Great Council of sixty members who are elected by popular vote. Two of these members are appointed every six months to act as Regents, and in such capacity exercise the executive power. So tranquil is the little republic that it scarcely needs a police force—an atmosphere in contrast to that created by the frenzied and feverish players who sit at the tables in Monaco.

Andorra Another Lilliput Republic

A Lilliput republic under the joint guardianship of France and the Spanish Bishop of Urgel is Andorra. Its 191 square miles of valley, almost ten thousand feet above the level of the sea, are tucked away in the heart of the Pyrenees Mountains. It is governed by a council of twenty-four members elected by the

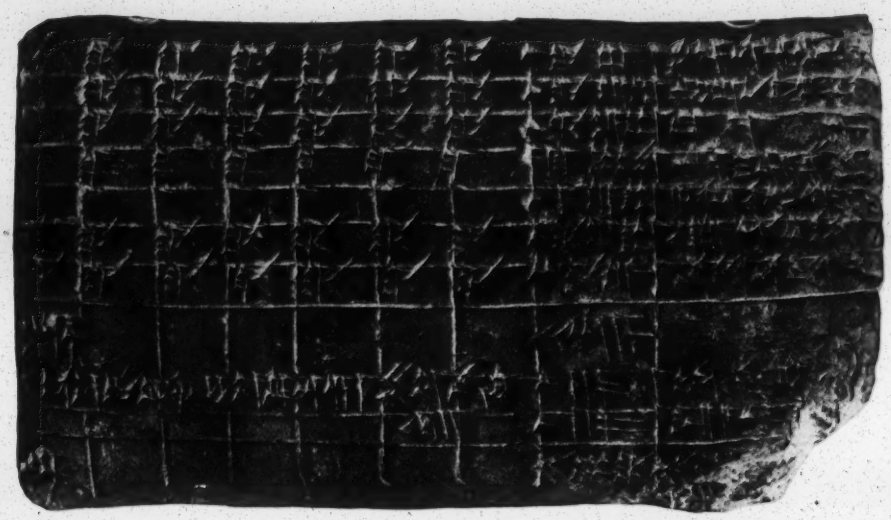
UMI

figure up transportation costs, cancel off as banks do with checks, and pay the charges.

Two New Members

Ireland and the Soviet Republic were admitted to the International Postal Union at the Stockholm meeting. The parts of the world not represented in the Universal Postal Union agreements to-day are Afghanistan, Arabia, Baluchistan, Johore and Trengganu in the Malay States, Maldive Islands, Northern and Southern Nigeria, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia, Santa Cruz Islands, Pitcairn Islands, Iraq, and Tonga Islands.

Through the offices of the Universal Postal Union magazines have become international as well as national by virtue of the economy in cost to subscribers. Foreign mails take The National Geographic Magazine to 61 independent countries and to 92 dependencies. The same material which is read by members of The Society in the United States can thus be read by other members in Gambia, Monaco, Abyssinia, Gabon, Zanzibar, the Society Islands and the Seychelles.



© *National Geographic Society.*

3,200-YEAR-OLD RECORD OF A WOMAN TAKING A MAN'S PLACE

This tablet, inscribed with a stylus, such as the one recently dug up in Mesopotamia (Iraq), gives the temple pay-roll for seven months in the fourteenth century, B. C. Another, almost identical, was found written two years later. Three changes had taken place—one man's salary was raised, that of another reduced, and a woman had taken a man's position receiving the same salary that he had enjoyed (see Bulletin No. 2).

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

French Guiana No Longer France's Jail

FRENCH GUIANA will no longer be a penal colony, it is reported from Paris.

The decision will bring new life and promise of progress to France's only remaining possession on the mainland in the New World and raises French Guiana to the position of its sister colonies in North Africa and the Far East.

Because it has been heard of principally in connection with the deportation of convicts, and especially in regard to the Dreyfus case, French Guiana has gained a black name. But in physical aspects and possibilities, at least, it is much like British and Dutch Guiana, both of which have had a fair degree of prosperity. With the convict millstone around its neck, French Guiana, as a colony, has never really had a chance.

The colony is situated about midway of the northern shore of South America, on one side touching Brazil not far from the mouth of the Amazon, and on the other, Dutch Guiana. It is about the size and shape of South Carolina; but there the likeness stops. French Guiana is only 200 miles north of the Equator, while South Carolina is some 1,800 miles farther north. The climate is fairly hot throughout the year and the rainfall is heavy. Mangrove thickets line the coast; farther inland are grassy plains, small editions of those of Venezuela; and beyond these are some of the densest forests to be found in South America.

Capital Gave Name to a Pepper

Except for the gold fields on some of the rivers, only the coastal fringe has been utilized by the French. Halfway inland live communities of former negro slaves—the so-called "bush negroes"—while the few remaining Indians have been pushed still farther from the coast. Agriculture hardly exists. Of the 32,000 square miles or more of the possession barely 20 square miles are under cultivation. The total population is probably less than 50,000.

Cayenne, known by sound at least because it has given its name to a pepper, is the capital and only port of importance in French Guiana. Its inhabitants number 15,000, nearly a third of the entire population of the country. With its houses of colored stucco and its avenues and squares shaded by superb palms, it has attractive aspects. In it dwell men of many climes and colors. Chinese keep the shops; natives of Indo-China supply the markets; officialdom is French; and on the streets are to be seen creoles from Martinique, Arabs from northern Africa, and negroes from Senegal and the Guiana interior.

Among the other public buildings in Cayenne is the ever present penitentiary used to house some of the transported criminals. St. Laurent, the westernmost town in French Guiana, on the Maroni River, opposite the Dutch village of Albina, was the seat of penal administration for the colony. There the directors of the penal establishment resided and nearby is a group of penitentiary buildings. Nine miles away, at the end of French Guiana's only stretch of railroad, is St. Jean, a penal settlement where convicts lived in cottages.

UMI

heads of families in its six parishes. This council nominates a First Syndicate which presides over its meetings and forms the country's executive department.

It is said that this little portion of Spain which is set down in the midst of French territory winks an eye at smuggling. In fact, it is claimed that during the recent war its chief occupation was getting things across the border into France without duty. The inhabitants discussed the practice as freely as they would the weather. But when it is advisable for an Andorran to keep his own counsel he can do it. A proverb in the Pyrenees is "Tell a thing to an Andorran and it is lost."

Another principality that jumped into public attention during the World War was Liechtenstein, whose sixty-five square miles of territory are surrounded by Switzerland and Austria. It declared its complete independence from the latter in November, 1918. This little country in the midst of a war-torn Europe is peacefully inclined. It has not had an army since 1886.

Bulletin No. 4, November 17, 1924.

Form for Renewal of Bulletin Requests

Many requests for the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN were made for the year ending with this issue. If you desire the Bulletins continued kindly notify The Society promptly. The attached form may be used:

School Service Department,
National Geographic Society,
Washington, D. C.

Kindly send.....copies of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN for the school year beginning with the issue of....., for classroom use, to

Name.....

Address for sending Bulletins.....

City.....State.....

I am a teacher in.....school.....grade.

Enclose 25 cents for each annual subscription.

Dreyfus Was Confined on Devil's Island

What may be considered the apex of the penal system of French Guiana, however, was not at St. Laurent, but on the Iles du Salut, off shore 40 miles from Cayenne. St. Joseph and Ile Royale have been penitentiaries for dangerous criminals. The third, Ile du Diable—Devil's Island—has been the heavily fortified jail of life prisoners. It was there that Captain Dreyfus, victim of a plot in the French Army, was confined.

Thousands of Frenchmen lost their lives from tropical fever in the effort to colonize Guiana before it was set aside for convicts. Of 14,000 volunteers sent out in 1763 from Alsace and Lorraine only a handful were alive after two years. In memory of Canada, skates were sent along on this expedition to the Tropics, but adequate food and agricultural implements were not provided. In 1797, during the French Revolutionary régime, 600 Royalists were banished to the colony, most of them to die miserably. It was then the land gained the name, "the dry guillotine."

Wild tales were believed about the Guiana region in the early days. Expeditions were sent there in the 16th century to search for "El Dorado," the mythical "Golden One," who was believed to live in a palace of rubies and emeralds and bathe in golden waters. Sir Walter Raleigh was one of these searchers.

Bulletin No. 5, November 17, 1924.

© *National Geographic Society.*

FISHING IS A SIMPLE MATTER IN THE GUIANAS

To catch a supply of fish, natives of the tropical forests of northern South America prepare a poison from leaves of a certain tree. A weir is built across a stream and the poison put in higher up. Soon the fish rise to the top stupefied, as if by a submarine explosion. The natives then take their pick (see Bulletin No. 5).